

Egremont Housing Committee Minutes

February 17, 2021

Meeting Held via ZOOM

In Attendance:

Committee Members: Joan Goodkind, Fred Gordon, Mark Holmes, Craig Barnum, Richard Allen

Guests: June Wolf, Construct, Inc., Carolyn Valli, Habitat for Humanity (HFH)

Meeting called to order by Joan Goodkind at 5:05 p.m.

The January 11, 2021, minutes were approved.

Egremont Housing Trust (EHT)

The Trust is still waiting for approval from the IRS as a tax exempt 501(C)(3). Buzz McGraw has accepted a position on the Board and Louann Harvey is still considering the position.

Development of Town Property

Carolyn Valli spoke of Habitat for Humanity's continued interest in developing the site. She received the most recent plot plan prepared by Jim Scalise which provides for 10 housing units. There was a discussion around leasing vs. sale of the property near the Transfer Station to Habitat for Humanity. Owning the underlying land provides for easier access to construction loans. It appears the sale of the land would require a zoning variance to accommodate the housing units.

Habitat for Humanity has not embarked on a project where they do not own the underlying land. Carolyn will explore the possibility of developing the land under a lease agreement, although it appears unlikely.

The Committee also discussed the number of units to be built on the site. In an earlier vote, Egremont voters approved four housing units on the property. An increase in housing units would require a citizen vote. The thought is to develop the property in phases with four houses in the first phase, another four in second phase and then a final phase with the potential for two additional houses. This approach would mitigate any potential shock to Egremont's infrastructure.

Egremont Housing Committee Minutes

HFH is most comfortable with income guidelines between 40 - 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). The Committee would like to see income guidelines of between 70% to 100% of AMI, which is the top limit acceptable to HFH. On a side note, for a family of 4, 80% of AMI (family income) is \$68,300.

Committee members reaffirmed their desire for workforce housing, with income limits of up to 120% of AMI. The hope is such housing can be provided outside of Habitat for Humanity developed properties.

As part of the development of the Project, HFH offers:

- Engagement with the community and in particular, abutters to the property, to educate them about the housing development and the services offered by Habitat for Humanity. Joan will provide Carolyn with a listing of abutters to the property.
- HFH would welcome the opportunity to speak at the Town Meeting about their capabilities and experience with building affordable housing in the area.
- Habitat for Humanity, considers the design of houses in the neighborhood so the houses they build are similar in design with surrounding homes.
- Provides a five year education approach for new homeowners including Home Ownership Association management training, mediation and budgeting. Since 2007, HFH has not experienced one mortgage foreclosure.
- Provides One Stop Shopping for mortgages, some with zero interest.

June Wolfe confirmed environmental and wetland studies were completed in anticipation of moving the donated houses from Manville Street. Unfortunately, the studies have expired.

The next meeting date is March 10, at 5:00.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40.

Egremont Housing Committee Minutes

Respectively submitted,
Fred Gordon